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JO & ROOSEVELT NATIONAL FORESTS

# CACHE

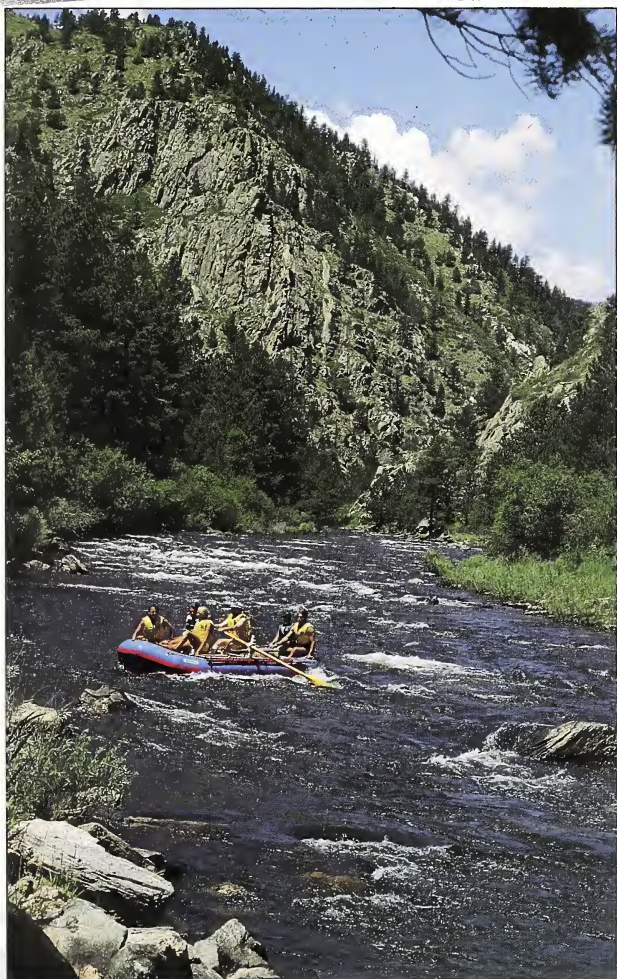
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# LA POUDRE

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*A Wild  
& Scenic River*



Produced in cooperation with the  
Rocky Mountain Nature Association  
and the USDA Forest Service.

# WELCOME . . .



**T**he Cache la Poudre River begins high in the peaks of Colorado's Rocky Mountain National Park along the Continental Divide. Flowing north and east through Roosevelt National Forest, it tumbles down the slopes of the Front Range and meanders through the city of Fort Collins. From its headwaters to the confluence with the South Platte River east of Greeley, the Cache la Poudre drops 7,000 feet.

The Cache la Poudre is Colorado's first National Wild and Scenic River. Highway 14, which follows much of the river, is a Scenic Byway between the towns of Fort Collins and Walden. The popularity of this river canyon grows each year. With opportunities for scenic driving, camping, fishing, rafting and more, it is an outstanding attraction for residents and visitors.

The river's name means "Hiding Place of Powder." According to legend, French fur trappers in the 1820's were caught by a tremendous snowstorm. To lighten their load, they buried large amounts of gunpowder (*poudre*) in a hiding place (*cache*) along the banks of the river.

This river corridor has been an important travel route since prehistoric times. Evidence of Native American occupation in the canyon includes tipi rings, rock shelters, fire hearths and a burial site with artifacts. In the late 1800's, gold mining and cutting trees for railroad ties brought the first permanent settlement to this canyon. Although a railroad following the river was never completed, many of the original grades became the foundation for Highway 14. Early mining efforts had little success, leaving behind ghost towns like Manhattan to tell the story.

Vegetation along the corridor is diverse. The lower canyon has open slopes of mountain mahogany, sagebrush and bitterbrush. Tree species include ponderosa and lodgepole pine, cottonwood, aspen and Rocky Mountain juniper. Douglas-fir, subalpine fir and spruce are found at higher elevations. Spruce budworm and pine bark beetle infestations have resulted in extensive areas of standing dead trees.

The Cache la Poudre is intensively managed for importing, storing and conveying water. It provides domestic and agricultural water for a large area of northern Colorado. One of the earliest transmountain diversion structures in the state is the Grand Ditch, built in the 1890's. It carries water from the headwaters of the Colorado River to the headwaters of the Cache la Poudre River. Flows in the Cache la Poudre are further supplemented in late summer by eight structures that import water from other river basins.

# A NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED RIVER!

**T**he Cache la Poudre is Colorado's first National Wild and Scenic River. To qualify as a Wild and Scenic River, a river (or part of a river) must be free-flowing and have at least one "outstandingly remarkable value." With such outstanding values as scenery, recreation and water quality, 75 miles of the Cache la Poudre were added to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System in October 1986.

During the 1960's, concern grew over the dwindling number of unpolluted, undeveloped rivers. For decades, Congress authorized using rivers for irrigation, power and navigation. Congress later recognized the need to balance a policy of damming and diverting rivers with a policy of maintaining other rivers in a free-flowing condition. In October 1968, Congress passed the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. As of 1992, a total of 10,516 river miles have been designated under this act. This is about one-third of one percent of the total river miles in the United States.



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Designated rivers are classified as Wild, Scenic or Recreational, depending on how much the rivers and their shorelines have been changed by people. Wild rivers are unpolluted, free of dams or diversions (impoundments), generally inaccessible except by trail and have essentially undisturbed shorelines. Scenic rivers are free of impoundments, mostly undeveloped, yet are accessible in places by road. Recreational rivers are easily accessible by road, have developed shorelines and may have been dammed or diverted in the past.

Along the Cache la Poudre, 30 miles are classified Wild and 45 miles are classified Recreational. No new dams or diversions will be built within these designated corridors. Future water development can, however, be considered along any portion of the Cache la Poudre not designated under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

Our Wild and Scenic rivers are for everyone to enjoy. However, please be aware that Wild and Scenic designation does not allow trespassing on private land.



# HAVE FUN . . .

**T**he Cache la Poudre River corridor offers a variety of recreational opportunities. The most popular activities include scenic driving, camping and picnicking, hiking, winter sports, hunting, fishing and whitewater boating. Specific information is available year-round at the Estes-Poudre and Redfeather Ranger District offices in Fort Collins, and during the summer at Arrowhead Lodge Visitor Center (milepost 88), 32 miles up the canyon from the eastern portal at Ted's Place.

**Scenic Driving:** The Cache la Poudre-North Park Scenic Byway is recognized as one of Colorado's premier scenic highways. Take time to stop along the corridor to enjoy the spectacular scenery and visit various interpretive exhibits. A network of Forest Service and county roads provides access to most areas of Roosevelt National Forest. Designated off-highway travel routes enable safe motorized travel and minimize conflicts with nonmotorized use. Check current Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forest maps for travel regulations, and be sure your vehicle is equipped to travel on roads that you select.

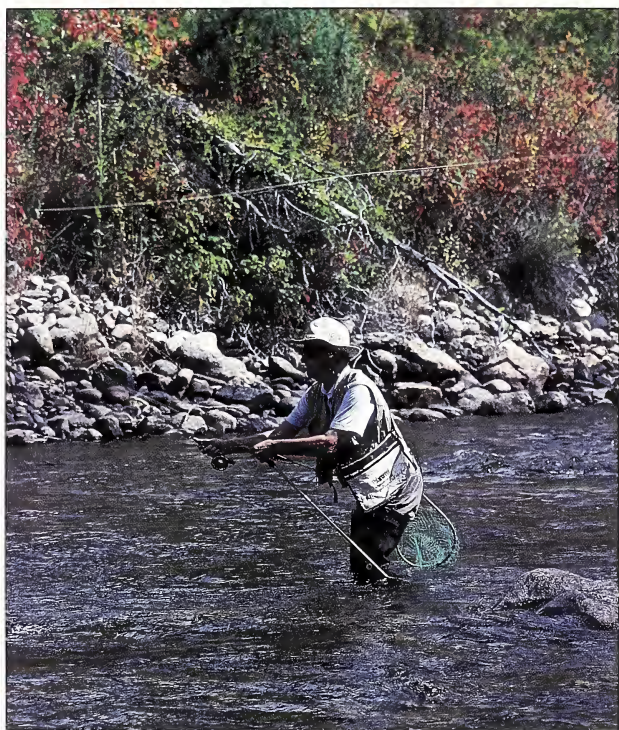


**Camping and Picnicking:** Developed facilities within the Wild and Scenic River corridor include 13 national forest campgrounds, with a total of 257 sites for overnight camping. The river corridor is also a great place to spend the day; there are 9 picnic areas in scenic outdoor settings.

**Trails:** Numerous trails begin in the canyon and allow foot, horse or bicycle access into the backcountry. The following trails begin in the Recreational River corridor and lead into adjacent national forest lands: Grey Rock, Hewlett Gulch, Young Gulch, Mount McConnell, Dadd Gulch and Roaring Creek. Three trails begin in the Wild River corridor and enter Wilderness areas: Big South, Emmaline Lake and Stormy Peaks. See information posted at the trailhead or consult an Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forest recreation map for appropriate uses on each trail.

**Winter Sports:** Wintertime fun is plentiful at higher elevations. Many Forest Service roads and trails receive heavy snow during winter months and are enjoyed by snowmobilers and cross-country skiers. Contact the Redfeather Ranger District for more information. Be prepared for cold weather emergencies and practice safe winter recreation procedures. For information contact the Colorado Avalanche Center: (303) 482-0457 November-April.

**Hunting:** Big game hunting on national forest lands is a popular activity during the fall. Several campgrounds with limited facilities are open during hunting season. Hunting is not permitted in developed recreation sites or within 50 feet of public roads. The Colorado Division of Wildlife manages permit and game regulations. Please consult their office or a local sporting shop to make sure that your hunt is legal.



**Fishing:** The Cache la Poudre provides some of the finest fishing in the entire state of Colorado. Near the town of Rustic, wild trout waters are managed with special regulations so that fly and lure enthusiasts have the opportunity to fish for wild trout. On the remaining 50 miles of river, anglers may catch and keep stocked rainbow and brown trout. (See map inset for special area designations.) Fishing licenses and brochures may be purchased at the Colorado Division of Wildlife and local sporting goods stores.

**Whitewater Boating:** Exciting whitewater activities occur on the Cache la Poudre from April through August. Convenient access, clear water, challenging rapids, and beautiful scenery make this a river-runner's paradise. Rafts, canoes and kayaks are suitable on various stretches of the river. If you are boating without a professional guide, be sure that you or someone in your group is familiar with the stretch of river that you have chosen to navigate. For those seeking a professionally guided river experience, commercial outfitters provide raft and kayak trips under special use permits from the Forest Service.

Remember, the character and difficulty of the rapids change drastically depending on water levels. Many stretches of the river require high levels of skill and experience. Be aware of low bridges and dams on the river and please, never boat alone.



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# AND TAKE CARE

**W**ith increasing numbers of visitors to the canyon, cooperation and consideration are more important than ever. Be safe, and please treat your fellow visitors, area residents and natural resources with respect.

## Along the Highway

- ▲ Be alert for bicyclists, cattle, wildlife and vehicles using turnouts or slowing to watch wildlife or boaters.
- ▲ Carpool and shuttle if possible as parking is limited.
- ▲ Use trash cans for litter; litter is unsightly and roadside clean-ups are expensive.

## While Picnicking or Camping

- ▲ Keep pets on leash no longer than six feet.
- ▲ Remove all food scraps; they attract wasps and skunks.
- ▲ Biodegradable soap is preferred, but keep it out of the river. Biodegradable means it will break down faster than other soaps; it may take 10 years instead of 20.
- ▲ Nice sand beaches should not be used as ashtrays; cigarette butts take over five years to degrade.

## While Boating

- ▲ Clear river accesses as quickly as possible; these areas are shared by many users.
- ▲ Know your abilities and those of the people you are with; many sections of this river require high skill levels. Be aware of dams, bridges and fluctuating water levels.
- ▲ Coast Guard approved lifejackets are useful only when fitted properly and worn.
- ▲ Never boat alone.

## In General

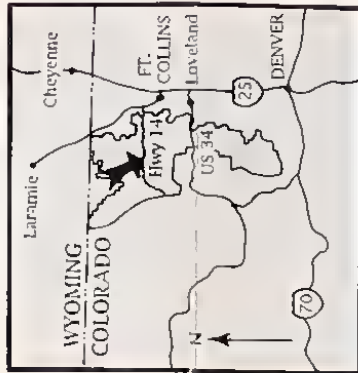
- ▲ Avoid drinking river water; clarity is no guarantee of purity. Use heat (boil five minutes), chemicals or filtration to kill harmful microscopic organisms.
- ▲ Keep noise down near homes, anglers and wildlife.
- ▲ Leave cultural resources (any evidence of human civilization) undisturbed for others to see.
- ▲ Respect property rights of landowners.
- ▲ Nonswimmers should wear lifejackets when near or in water. Never rely on inflatable toys as flotation devices; use only Coast Guard approved lifejackets.
- ▲ The river is rocky and powerful; waterplay and swimming are not recommended. Watch children closely.



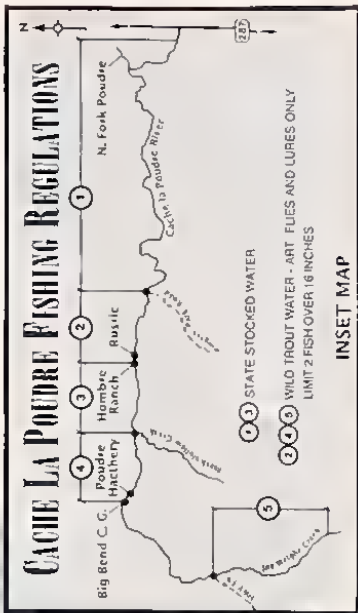


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### VICINITY MAP



### CACHE LA POUDE FISHING REGULATIONS



### INSET MAP

#### Your Responsibility

It is your responsibility to be aware of the potential risks, have the proper equipment, and take safety precautions at all times when you visit National Forest areas. Changing terrain, forests, and weather conditions present a wide variety of hazards. Hazards include, but are not limited to: snow and ice fields, avalanches, landslides, caves, falling trees or limbs, high or rushing water, contaminated water, wild animals, severe weather, becoming lost or over-exercised, hypothermia, remnants of mining and other activities involving excavations, and exposure to unreasonable acts of other people.

## CACHE LA POUDE “WILD” AND “RECREATIONAL” RIVER MAP

## RECREATION INDEX

Area	Use	Fee	# of Sites
1 Poudre Park	⚡		2
2 Diamond Rock	⚡		10
3 Ouzel	⚡		4
4 Ansel Watrous	⚡	♦	19 22
5 Stove Prairie	⚡	♦	9 12
6 Upper Landing	⚡		6
7 Steven's Gulch	⚡		4 6
8 Narrows River Access	⚡		14 12
9 Narrows Campground	⚡	♦	12
10 Dutch George Flats	⚡	♦	25
11 Mountain Park	⚡	♦	43 52
12 Kelly Flats	⚡	♦	23 38
13 Bennett Creek	⚡		4
14 Jack's Gulch	⚡	♦	50
15 Fish Creek	⚡		4
16 Tom Bennett	⚡	♦	8 25
17 Eggers	⚡		
18 Indian Meadows	⚡		2
19 Big Bend	⚡	♦	9
20 Sleeping Elephant	⚡	♦	15 19
21 Tunnel	⚡		4
22 Big South	⚡		4
23 Aspen Glen	⚡	♦	8
24 Chambers Lake	⚡	♦	45
25 Long Draw	⚡		25
26 Grandview	⚡		7
27 Tunnel	⚡	♦	49

♦ = Facilities after construction 1992-1996.



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### LEGEND

- ⚡ River Access
- ⚡ Trailhead
- ⚡ Interpretive Trail
- ⚡ Hiking Trail
- ⚡ Picnic Area
- ⚡ Fishing Access
- ⚡ Campground
- ⚡ Horse Trail
- ⚡ Point of Interest
- ⚡ Information
- ⚡ Trailer Dump Station
- ⚡ Dam
- ⚡ State Highway
- ⚡ County Road
- ⚡ Secondary Forest Road





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# LOOKING AHEAD

**T**he Forest Service is managing the Cache la Poudre to provide opportunities for high quality recreation and to protect the river environment. Our goal is to maintain a balance of uses along the corridor, while minimizing conflicts in this increasingly popular canyon.

The heaviest use along the river occurs throughout the summer. Limited parking and recreation facilities, especially in the narrow lower canyon, require management actions to protect the scenic setting and natural resources.

Camping in undeveloped areas, for example, has had serious impact on the river environment, including vegetation damage and soil erosion. To repair this damage and prevent future impact of this kind, the Forest Service is improving existing picnic and camping areas and building additional day and overnight facilities to accommodate a growing number of visitors. When the improvements are completed, camping along the corridor will only be permitted in developed, designated areas.

We hope you enjoy the U.S. Forest Service facilities in the Cache la Poudre canyon and have patience with areas being improved or newly constructed. For further information, contact the Estes-Poudre or Redfeather Ranger District offices in Fort Collins, Colorado.

